A/S-23/13

United Nations

Resolutions
and
Decisions

adopted by the General Assembly during its twenty-third special session

5 – 10 June 2000

General Assembly
Official Records • Twenty-third Special Session
Supplement No. 1 (A/S-23/13)

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NOTE

The resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly are identified as follows:

Regular sessions

Until the thirtieth regular session, the resolutions of the General Assembly were identified by an arabic numeral followed by a roman numeral in parentheses indicating the session (for example: resolution 3363 (XXX)). When several resolutions were adopted under the same number, each of them was identified by a capital letter placed between the two numerals (for example: resolution 3367 A (XXX), resolutions 3411 A and B (XXX), resolutions 3419 A to D (XXX)). The decisions were not numbered.

Since the thirty-first session, as part of the new system adopted for symbols of General Assembly documents, resolutions and decisions have been identified by an arabic numeral, indicating the session, followed by an oblique stroke and another arabic numeral (for example: resolution 31/1, decision 31/301). When several resolutions or decisions were adopted under the same number, each of them has been identified by a capital letter placed after the two numerals (for example: resolution 31/16 A, resolutions 31/6 A and B, decisions 31/406 A to E).

Special sessions

Until the seventh special session, the resolutions of the General Assembly were identified by an arabic numeral followed, in parentheses, by the letter "S" and a roman numeral indicating the session (for example: resolution 3362 (S-VII)). The decisions were not numbered.

Since the eighth special session, resolutions and decisions have been identified by the letter "S" and an arabic numeral indicating the session, followed by an oblique stroke and another arabic numeral (for example: resolution S-8/1, decision S-8/11).

Emergency special sessions

Until the fifth emergency special session, the resolutions of the General Assembly were identified by an arabic numeral followed, in parentheses, by the letters "ES" and a roman numeral indicating the session (for example: resolution 2252 (ES-V)). The decisions were not numbered.

Since the sixth emergency special session, resolutions and decisions have been identified by the letters "ES" and an arabic numeral indicating the session, followed by an oblique stroke and another arabic numeral (for example: resolution ES-6/1, decision ES-6/11).

In each of the series described above, the numbering follows the order of adoption.

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In addition to the text of resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its twenty-third special session, the present volume contains a checklist of resolutions and decisions.

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I. Agenda[1]

1. Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Namibia.
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3. Credentials of representatives to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly:
   (*a*) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee;
   (*b*) Report of the Credentials Committee.
4. Election of the President.
5. Report of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".
6. Organization of the session.
7. Adoption of the agenda.
8. Review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action.
9. Further actions and initiatives for overcoming obstacles to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
10. Adoption of the final documents.

[1] See also sect. IV.B, decision S-23/22.

II. Resolution adopted on the report of the Credentials Committee

S-23/1. Credentials of representatives to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Credentials Committee and the recommendation contained therein,[1]

Approves the report of the Credentials Committee.

8th plenary meeting
8 June 2000

[1] A/S-23/7, para. 15.

III. Resolutions adopted on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly

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S-23/2. Political declaration

The General Assembly

Adopts the political declaration annexed to the present resolution.

10th plenary meeting
10 June 2000

Annex

Political declaration

We the Governments participating in the special session of the General Assembly

1. *Reaffirm* our commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration[1] and Platform for Action,[2] adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the year 2000 as the culmination of the United Nations Decade for Women, 1976 to 1985;[3]

2. *Also reaffirm* our commitment to the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action, which are women and poverty, education and training of women, women and health, violence against women, women and armed conflict, women and the economy, women in power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights of women, women and the media, women and the environment, and the girl child; and call for the implementation of the agreed conclusions and resolutions on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women since the fortieth session of the Commission;

3. *Recognize* that we have primary responsibility for the full implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and all the relevant commitments for the advancement of women, and, in this connection, call for continued international cooperation, including the reaffirmation to strive to fulfil the yet to be

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance as soon as possible;

4. *Welcome* the progress made thus far towards gender equality and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and reaffirm our commitment to accelerate the achievement of universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[4] and in this regard acknowledge the efforts at all levels of Governments, the United Nations system, and intergovernmental, other international and regional organizations and urge continued efforts for the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

5. *Recognize* the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and encourage their participation in further implementation and assessment processes;

6. *Emphasize* that men must involve themselves and take joint responsibility with women for the promotion of gender equality;

7. *Reaffirm* the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the process of implementation of the outcome of other major United Nations conferences and summits and the need for a coordinated follow-up to all major conferences and summits by Governments, regional organizations, and all of the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system within their respective mandates.

We the Governments, at the beginning of the new millennium,

8. *Reaffirm* our commitment to overcoming obstacles encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and to strengthening and safeguarding a national and international enabling environment, and to this end pledge to undertake further action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation, inter alia, through the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes and promoting full participation and empowerment of women and enhanced international cooperation for the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

9. *Agree* to assess regularly further implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a view to bringing together all parties involved in 2005 to assess progress and consider new initiatives, as appropriate, ten years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action and twenty years after the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women;

10. *Pledge* to ensure the realization of societies in which both women and men work together towards a world where every individual can enjoy equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

S-23/3. Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

The General Assembly

Adopts the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration[5] and Platform for Action,[6] annexed to the present resolution.

10th plenary meeting
10 June 2000

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[4] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[5] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[6] Ibid., annex II.

Annex

Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

I. Introduction

1. The Governments which came together at the special session of the General Assembly have reaffirmed their commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration[5] and Platform for Action[6] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 as contained in the report of the Conference. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action set as goals gender equality, development and peace and constituted an agenda for the empowerment of women. The Governments reviewed and appraised progress and identified obstacles and current challenges in the implementation of the Platform for Action. They recognized that the goals set and commitments made in the Platform for Action have not been fully achieved and implemented, and have agreed upon further actions and initiatives at the local, national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action and to ensure that commitments for gender equality, development and peace are fully realized.

2. The Beijing Platform for Action identified twelve critical areas of concern for priority action to achieve the advancement and empowerment of women. The Commission on the Status of Women has reviewed progress in each of the twelve critical areas of concern and since 1996 has adopted agreed conclusions and recommendations for accelerated implementation. The Platform for Action, together with these agreed conclusions and recommendations, forms the basis for further progress towards the achievement of gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

3. The objective of the Platform for Action, which is in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, is the empowerment of all women. The full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women is essential for the empowerment of women. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The implementation of the Platform for Action, including through national laws and the formulation of strategies, policies, programmes and development priorities, is the sovereign responsibility of each State, in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the significance of and full respect for various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities should contribute to the full enjoyment by women of their human rights and the achievement of equality, development and peace.

4. The Platform for Action emphasizes that women share common concerns that can only be addressed by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality around the world. It respects and values the full diversity of women's situations and conditions and recognizes that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment.

5. The Platform for Action recognizes that women face barriers to full equality and advancement because of such factors as their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or of other status. Many women encounter specific obstacles related to their family status, particularly as single parents, and to their socio-economic status, including their living conditions in rural, isolated or impoverished areas. Additional barriers also exist for refugee women, other displaced women, including internally displaced women, as well as for immigrant women and migrant women, including women migrant workers. Many women are also particularly affected by environmental disasters, serious and infectious diseases and various forms of violence against women.

II. Achievements in and obstacles to the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action

6. Assessment of achievements and obstacles must be made in relation to the commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action and its twelve critical areas of concern, namely by looking into the actions taken and the results attained, as indicated in national reports, as well as by taking note of the

reports of the Secretary-General and of the results, conclusions and agreements of the five regional meetings held in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly and other relevant sources. Such assessment shows that, even though significant positive developments can be identified, barriers remain and that the goals set and commitments made in Beijing need to implemented further. The summary of achievements and of persistent or new obstacles can therefore constitute a global framework for the identification of further actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action at all levels and in all areas.

A. Women and poverty

7. *Achievements*. Considerable progress has been achieved in increasing recognition of gender dimensions of poverty and in the recognition that gender equality is one of the factors of specific importance for eradicating poverty, particularly in relation to the feminization of poverty. Efforts have been made to integrate a gender perspective into poverty eradication policies and programmes by Governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations. Multilateral, international and regional financial institutions are also giving increased attention to the incorporation of a gender perspective into their policies. Progress has been made by pursuing a two-pronged approach of promoting employment and income-generating activities for women and providing access to basic social services, including education and health care. Microcredit and other financial instruments for women have emerged as a successful strategy for economic empowerment and have widened economic opportunities for some women living in poverty, in particular in rural areas. Policy development has taken account of the particular needs of female-headed households. Research has enhanced the understanding of the differing impacts of poverty on women and men and tools have been developed to assist with this assessment.

8. *Obstacles*. Many factors have contributed to widening economic inequality between women and men, including income inequality, unemployment and the deepening of poverty levels of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Debt burdens, excessive military spending, inconsistent with national security requirements, unilateral coercive measures at variance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, armed conflict, foreign occupation, terrorism, low levels of official development assistance and the unfulfilled commitment to strive to fulfil the yet to be attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance and 0.15 to 0.2 per cent for the least developed countries, as well as the lack of efficient use of resources, among other factors, can constrain national efforts to combat poverty. In addition, gender inequalities and disparities in economic power-sharing, unequal distribution of unremunerated work between women and men, lack of technological and financial support for women's entrepreneurship, unequal access to, and control over, capital, particularly land and credit and access to labour markets, as well as all harmful traditional and customary practices, have constrained women's economic empowerment and exacerbated the feminization of poverty. Fundamental economic restructuring experienced by the countries with economies in transition has led to lack of resources for poverty-eradication programmes aimed at empowerment of women.

B. Education and training of women

9. *Achievements*. There is an increased awareness that education is one of the most valuable means of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. Progress was achieved in women's and girls' education and training at all levels, especially where there was sufficient political commitment and resource allocation. Measures were taken in all regions to initiate alternative education and training systems to reach women and girls in indigenous communities and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups to encourage them to pursue all fields of study, in particular non-traditional fields of stud , and to remove gender biases from education and training.

10. *Obstacles*. In some countries, efforts to eradicate illiteracy and strengthen literacy among women and girls and to increase their access to all levels and types of education were constrained by the lack of resources and insufficient political will and commitment to improve educational infrastructure and undertake educational reforms; persisting gender discrimination and bias, including in teacher training; gender-based occupational stereotyping in schools, institutions of further education and communities;

lack of childcare facilities; persistent use of gender stereotypes in educational materials; and insufficient attention paid to the link between women's enrolment in higher educational institutions and labour market dynamics. The remote location of some communities and, in some cases, inadequate salaries and benefits make attracting and retaining teaching professionals difficult and can result in lower quality education. Additionally, in a number of countries, economic, social and infrastructural barriers, as well as traditional discriminatory practices, have contributed to lower enrolment and retention rates for girls. Little progress has been made in eradicating illiteracy in some developing countries, aggravating women's inequality at the economic, social and political levels. In some of these countries, the inappropriate design and application of structural adjustment policies has had a particularly severe impact on the education sector since they resulted in declining investment in education infrastructure.

C. Women and health

11. *Achievements*. Programmes have been implemented to create awareness among policy makers and planners of the need for health programmes to cover all aspects of women's health throughout women's life cycle, which have contributed to an increase in life expectancy in many countries. There is: increased attention to high mortality rates among women and girls as a result of malaria, tuberculosis, water-borne diseases, communicable and diarrhoeal diseases and malnutrition; increased attention to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women as contained in paragraphs 94 and 95 of the Platform for Action, as well as in some countries increased emphasis on implementing paragraph 96 of the Platform for Action; increased knowledge and use of family planning and contraceptive methods as well as increased awareness among men of their responsibility in family planning and contraceptive methods and their use; increased attention to sexually transmitted infections, including human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) among women and girls, and methods to protect against such infections; increased attention to breastfeeding, nutrition, infants' and mothers' health; the introduction of a gender perspective in health and health-related educational and physical activities, and gender-specific prevention and rehabilitation programmes on substance abuse, including tobacco, drugs and alcohol; increased attention to women's mental health, health conditions at work, environmental considerations and recognition of the specific health needs of older women. At its twenty-first special session, held in New York from 30 June to 2 July 1999, the General Assembly reviewed achievements and adopted key actions[7] in the field of women's health for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.[8]

12. *Obstacles*. Worldwide, the gap between and within rich and poor countries with respect to infant mortality and maternal mortality and morbidity rates, as well as with respect to measures addressing the health of women and girls, given their special vulnerability regarding sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS and other sexual and reproductive health problems, together with endemic, infectious and communicable diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhoeal and water-borne diseases and chronic non-transmissible diseases, remains unacceptable. In some countries, such endemic, infectious and communicable diseases continue to take a toll on women and girls. In other countries, non-communicable diseases, such as cardiopulmonary diseases, hypertension and degenerative diseases, remain among the major causes of mortality and morbidity among women. Despite progress in some countries, the rates of maternal mortality and morbidity remain unacceptably high in most countries. Investment in essential obstetric care remains insufficient in many countries. The absence of a holistic approach to health and health care for women and girls based on women's right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health throughout the life cycle has constrained progress. Some women continue to encounter barriers to their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The predominant focus of health-care systems on treating illness rather than maintaining optimal health also prevents a holistic approach. There is, in some countries, insufficient attention to the role of social and economic

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[7] See resolution S-21/2, annex.

[8] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

determinants of health. A lack of access to clean water, adequate nutrition and safe sanitation, a lack of gender-specific health research and technology and insufficient gender sensitivity in the provision of health information and health care and health services, including those related to environmental and occupational health hazards, affect women in developing and developed countries. Poverty and the lack of development continue to affect the capacity of many developing countries to provide and expand quality health care. A shortage of financial and human resources, in particular in developing countries, as well as restructuring of the health sector and/or the increasing trend to privatization of health-care systems in some cases, has resulted in poor quality, reduced and insufficient health-care services, and has also led to less attention to the health of the most vulnerable groups of women. Such obstacles as unequal power relationships between women and men, in which women often do not have the power to insist on safe and responsible sex practices, and a lack of communication and understanding between men and women on women's health needs, inter alia, endanger women's health, particularly by increasing their susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and affect women's access to health care and education, especially in relation to prevention. Adolescents, particularly adolescent girls, continue to lack access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services. Women who are recipients of health care are frequently not treated with respect nor guaranteed privacy and confidentiality, and do not receive full information about options and services available. In some cases, health services and workers still do not conform to human rights and to ethical, professional and gender-sensitive standards in the delivery of women's health services, nor do they ensure responsible, voluntary and informed consent. There continues to be a lack of information on availability of and access to appropriate, affordable, primary health-care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care, insufficient attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care as well as a lack of prevention, screening and treatment for breast, cervical and ovarian cancers and osteoporosis. The testing and development of male contraceptives is still insufficient. While some measures have been taken in some countries, the actions set out in paragraphs 106 (*j*) and (*k*) of the Platform for Action regarding the health impact of unsafe abortion and the need to reduce the recourse to abortion have not been fully implemented. The rising incidence of tobacco use among women, particularly young women, has increased their risk of cancer and other serious diseases, as well as gender-specific risks from tobacco and environmental tobacco smoke.

D. Violence against women

13. *Achievements*. It is widely accepted that violence against women and girls, whether occurring in public or private life, is a human rights issue. It is accepted that violence against women, where perpetrated or condoned by the State or its agents, constitutes a human rights violation. It is also accepted that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons, and provide protection to victims. There is increased awareness of and commitment to preventing and combating violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, which violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, through, inter alia, improved legislation, policies and programmes. Governments have initiated policy reforms and mechanisms, such as interdepartmental committees, guidelines and protocols, national, multidisciplinary and coordinated programmes to address violence. Some Governments have also introduced or reformed laws to protect women and girls from all forms of violence and laws to prosecute the perpetrators. There is an increasing recognition at all levels that all forms of violence against women seriously affect their health. Health-care providers are seen to have a significant role to play in addressing this matter. Some progress has been made in the provision of services for abused women and children, including legal services, shelters, special health services and counselling, hotlines and police units with special training. Education for law enforcement personnel, members of the judiciary, health-care providers and welfare workers is being promoted. Educational materials for women and public awareness campaigns have been developed as well as research on the root causes of violence. Research into and specialized studies on gender roles are increasing, in particular on men's and boys' roles, and all forms of violence against women, as well as on the situation of and impact on children growing up in families where violence occurs. Successful cooperation has been achieved between governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of preventing violence against women. The active support of civil society, in particular women's organizations and non-governmental organizations, has had an

important role, inter alia, in promoting awareness-raising campaigns and in the provision of support services to women victims of violence. Efforts towards the eradication of harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, which is a form of violence against women, have received national, regional and international policy support. Many Governments have introduced educational and outreach programmes, as well as legislative measures criminalizing these practices. In addition, this support includes the appointment of the Special Ambassador for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation by the United Nations Population Fund.

14. *Obstacles*. Women continue to be victims of various forms of violence. Inadequate understanding of the root causes of all forms of violence against women and girls hinders efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. There is a lack of comprehensive programmes dealing with the perpetrators, including programmes, where appropriate, which would enable them to solve problems without violence. Inadequate data on violence further impedes informed policy-making and analysis. Sociocultural attitudes which are discriminatory and economic inequalities reinforce women's subordinate place in society. This makes women and girls vulnerable to many forms of violence, such as physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation. In many countries, a coordinated multidisciplinary approach to responding to violence which includes the health system, the workplace, the media, the education system, as well as the justice system, is still limited. Domestic violence, including sexual violence in marriage, is still treated as a private matter in some countries. Insufficient awareness of the consequences of domestic violence, how to prevent it and the rights of victims still exists. Although improving, the legal and legislative measures, especially in the criminal justice area, to eliminate different forms of violence against women and children, including domestic violence and child pornography, are weak in many countries. Prevention strategies also remain fragmented and reactive and there is a lack of programmes on these issues. It is also noted that, in some countries, problems have arisen from the use of new information and communication technologies for trafficking in women and children and for purposes of all forms of economic and sexual exploitation.

E. Women and armed conflict

15. *Achievements*. There is a wider recognition that the destructive impact of armed conflict is different on women and men and that a gender-sensitive approach to the application of international human rights law and international humanitarian law is important. Steps have been taken at the national and international levels to address abuses against women, including increased attention to ending impunity for crimes against women in situations of armed conflict. The work of the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia[9] and Rwanda[10] has been an important contribution to address violence against women in the context of armed conflict. Also of historical significance is the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[11] which provides that rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence are war crimes when committed in the context of armed conflict and also under defined circumstances, crimes against humanity. The contribution of women in the areas of peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution is being increasingly recognized. Education and training in non-violent conflict resolution have been introduced. Progress has been made in the dissemination and implementation of the guidelines for the protection of refugee women, and in addressing the needs of displaced women. Gender-based persecution has been accepted as a basis for refugee status in some countries. There is

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[9] International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

[10] International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994.

[11] A/CONF.183/9.

recognition by Governments, the international community and organizations, in particular the United Nations, that women and men experience humanitarian emergencies differently, and there is a need for a more holistic support for refugee and displaced women, including those who have suffered all forms of abuse, including gender-specific abuse, to ensure equal access to appropriate and adequate food and nutrition, clean water, safe sanitation, shelter, education, social and health services, including reproductive health care and maternity care. There is greater recognition of the need to integrate a gender perspective in the planning, design and implementation of humanitarian assistance and to provide adequate resources. Humanitarian relief agencies and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, have played an increasingly important role in the provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as in the design, where appropriate, and implementation of programmes to address the needs of women and girls, including refugee and displaced women and girls in humanitarian emergencies, and in conflict and post-conflict situations.

16. *Obstacles*. Peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and development. Armed conflicts and conflicts of other types, wars of aggression, foreign occupation, colonial or other alien domination, as well as terrorism, continue to cause serious obstacles to the advancement of women. The targeting of civilians, including women and children, the displacement of people, and the recruitment of child soldiers in violation of national or international law, by State and/or non-State actors, which occur in armed conflicts, have had a particularly adverse impact on gender equality and women's human rights. Armed conflict creates or exacerbates the high level of female-headed households, which in many cases are living in poverty. The under-representation, at all levels, of women in decision-making positions, such as special envoys or special representatives of the Secretary-General, in peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction, as well as lack of gender awareness in these areas, presents serious obstacles. There has been a failure to provide sufficient resources, to distribute adequately resources and to address the needs of increasing numbers of refugees, who are mostly women and children, particularly in developing countries hosting large numbers of refugees; international assistance has not kept pace with the increasing number of refugees. The growing number of internally displaced persons and the provision for their needs, in particular women and children, continue to represent a double burden to the affected countries and their financial resources. Inadequate training of personnel dealing with the needs of women in situations of armed conflict or as refugees, such as a shortage of specific programmes that address the healing of women from trauma and skills training, remains a problem.

17. Excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures, trade in arms and investment for arms production, taking into consideration national security requirements, direct the possible allocation of funds away from social and economic development, in particular for the advancement of women. In several countries, economic sanctions have had social and humanitarian impacts on the civilian population, in particular women and children.

18. In some countries, the advancement of women is adversely affected by unilateral measures at variance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that create obstacles to trade relations among States, impede the full realization of social and economic development and jeopardize the well-being of the population in the affected countries, with particular consequences for women and children.

19. In situations of armed conflict, there are continued violations of human rights of women, which are violations of fundamental principles of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. There has been an increase in all forms of violence against women, including sexual slavery, rape, systematic rape, sexual abuse and forced pregnancies, in situations of armed conflict. Displacement compounded by loss of home and property, poverty, family disintegration and separation and other consequences of armed conflict are severely affecting the populations, especially women and children. Girls are also abducted or recruited, in violation of international law, into situations of armed conflict, including as combatants, sexual slaves or providers of domestic services.

F. Women and the economy

20. *Achievements*. There is increased participation of women in the labour market and subsequent gain in economic autonomy. Some Governments have introduced a variety of measures that address

women's economic and social rights, equal access to and control over economic resources and equality in employment. Other measures include the ratification of international labour conventions as well as enacting or strengthening legislation to make it compatible with these conventions. There is increased awareness of the need to reconcile employment and family responsibilities and of the positive effect of such measures as maternity and paternity leave and also parental leave, and child and family care services and benefits. Some Governments have made provisions to address discriminatory and abusive behaviour in the workplace and to prevent unhealthy working conditions, and have established funding mechanisms to promote women's roles in entrepreneurship, education and training, including scientific and technical skills and decision-making. Research has been conducted on barriers to economic empowerment faced by women, including the relationship between remunerated and unremunerated work, and tools are being developed to assist with this assessment.

21. *Obstacles*. The importance of a gender perspective in the development of macroeconomic policy is still not widely recognized. Many women still work in rural areas and the informal economy as subsistence producers, and in the service sector with low levels of income and little job and social security. Many women with comparable skills and experience are confronted with a gender wage gap and lag behind men in income and career mobility in the formal sector. Equal pay for women and men for equal work, or work of equal value, has not yet been fully realized. Gender discrimination in hiring and promotion and related to pregnancy, including through pregnancy testing, and sexual harassment in the workplace persist. In some countries, women's full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to inheritance, is not recognized yet in national legislation. Progression in the professions, in most cases, is still more difficult for women, due to the lack of structures and measures that take into account maternity and family responsibilities. In some cases, persistent gender stereotyping has led to a lower status of male workers who are fathers and to insufficient encouragement for men to reconcile professional and family responsibilities. Lack of family-friendly policies regarding the organization of work increases these difficulties. Effective implementation of legislation and practical support systems is still inadequate. The combination of remunerated work and caregiving within families, households and communities still leads to a disproportionate burden for women since there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities by men. It is still also women who perform the larger part of unremunerated work.

G. Women in power and decision-making

22. *Achievements*. There has been growing acceptance of the importance to society of the full participation of women in decision-making and power at all levels and in all forums, including the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental sectors. In some countries, women have also attained higher positions in these spheres. An increasing number of countries applied affirmative and positive action policies, including quota systems or voluntary agreements in some countries and measurable goals and targets, developed training programmes for women's leadership, and introduced measures to reconcile family and work responsibilities of both women and men. National mechanisms and machineries for the advancement of women as well as national and international networks of women politicians, parliamentarians, activists and professionals in various fields have been established or upgraded and strengthened.

23. *Obstacles*. Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality has persisted. Notwithstanding substantial improvement of de jure equality between women and men, the actual participation of women at the highest levels of national and international decision-making has not significantly changed since the time of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, and gross under-representation of women in decision-making bodies in all areas, including politics, conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, the economy, the environment and the media, hinders the inclusion of a gender perspective in these critical spheres of influence. Women continue to be underrepresented at the legislative, ministerial and sub-ministerial levels, as well as at the highest levels of the corporate sector and other economic and social institutions. Traditionally assigned gender roles limit women's choices in education and careers and compel women to assume the burden for household responsibilities. Initiatives and programmes aimed at women's increased participation in decision-making have been hindered by a lack of human and financial resources for training and advocacy for political careers;

gender-sensitive attitudes towards women in society; awareness of women to engage in decision-making in some cases; accountability of elected officials and political parties for promoting gender equality and women's participation in public life; social awareness of the importance of balanced participation of women and men in decision-making; willingness on the part of men to share power; sufficient dialogue and cooperation with women's non-governmental organizations, along with organizational and political structures, which enable all women to participate in all spheres of political decision-making.

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

24. *Achievements.* National machineries have been instituted or strengthened and recognized as the institutional base acting as catalysts for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming and monitoring of the implementation of the Platform for Action and in many instances of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.[12] In many countries, progress has been achieved in terms of the visibility, status, outreach and coordination of activities of these machineries. Gender mainstreaming has been widely acknowledged as a strategy to enhance the impact of policies to promote gender equality. The goal of the strategy is to incorporate a gender perspective in all legislation, policies, programmes and projects. These machineries, despite their limited financial resources, have made a significant contribution to the development of human resources in the field of gender studies and have also contributed to the growing efforts for the generation and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, gender-sensitive research and documentation. Within the United Nations system, much progress has been made in the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, including through the development of tools and the creation of gender focal points.

25. *Obstacles.* In a number of countries, inadequate financial and human resources and a lack of political will and commitment are the main obstacles confronting national machineries. This is further exacerbated by insufficient understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming among government structures, as well as prevailing gender stereotypes, discriminatory attitudes, competing government priorities and, in some countries, unclear mandates, a marginalized location within the national government structures, lack of data disaggregated by sex and age in many areas and insufficiently applied methods for assessing progress, in addition to paucity of authority and insufficient links to civil society. The activities of the national machineries have been also hindered by structural and communication problems within and among government agencies.

I. Human rights of women

26. *Achievements.* Legal reforms have been undertaken to prohibit all forms of discrimination and discriminatory provisions have been eliminated in civil, penal and personal status law governing marriage and family relations, all forms of violence, women's property and ownership rights and women's political, work and employment rights. Steps have been taken to realize women's de facto enjoyment of their human rights through the creation of an enabling environment, including the adoption of policy measures, the improvement of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms and the implementation of legal literacy and awareness campaigns at all levels. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[12] has been ratified or acceded to by one hundred and sixty-five countries and its full implementation has been promoted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. At its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention,[13] allowing women claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Convention by a State party to submit their claims to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to which non-governmental organizations contributed by raising awareness and generating support for its adoption. Women's non-governmental organizations have also contributed to raising awareness that women's rights are human rights. They also generated support for the inclusion of a gender perspective in the elaboration of the

[12] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[13] Resolution 54/4, annex.

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.[11] Progress has also been made to integrate the human rights of women and mainstream a gender perspective into the United Nations system, including into the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and of the Commission on Human Rights.

27. *Obstacles*. Gender discrimination and all other forms of discrimination, in particular racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance continue to cause threat to women's enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In situations of armed conflict and foreign occupation, human rights of women have been extensively violated. Even though a number of countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the goal of universal ratification by the year 2000 has not been achieved, and there continue to be a large number of reservations to the Convention. While there is an increasing acceptance of gender equality, many countries have not yet implemented fully the provisions of the Convention. Discriminatory legislation as well as harmful traditional and customary practices and negative stereotyping of women and men still persist. Family, civil, penal, labour and commercial laws or codes, or administrative rules and regulations, still have not fully integrated a gender perspective. Legislative and regulatory gaps, as well as lack of implementation and enforcement of legislation and regulations, perpetuate de jure as well as de facto inequality and discrimination, and in a few cases, new laws discriminating against women have been introduced. In many countries, women have insufficient access to the law, resulting from illiteracy, lack of legal literacy, information and resources, insensitivity and gender bias, and lack of awareness of the human rights of women by law enforcement officials and the judiciary, who in many cases fail to respect the human rights of women and the dignity and worth of the human person. There is insufficient recognition of women's and girls' reproductive rights, as well as barriers to their full enjoyment of those rights, which embrace certain human rights as defined in paragraph 95 of the Beijing Platform for Action. Some women and girls continue to encounter barriers to justice and the enjoyment of their human rights because of such factors as their race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or socio-economic class or because they are indigenous people, migrants, including women migrant workers, displaced women or refugees.

J. Women and the media

28. *Achievements*. The establishment of local, national and international women's media networks has contributed to global information dissemination, exchange of views and support to women's groups active in media work. The development of information and communication technologies, especially the Internet, has provided improved communication opportunities for the empowerment of women and girls, which has enabled an increasing number of women to contribute to knowledge sharing, networking and electronic commerce activities. The number of women's media organizations and programmes has increased, facilitating the aims of increased participation and promotion of positive portrayals of women in the media. Progress has been made to combat negative images of women by establishing professional guidelines and voluntary codes of conduct, encouraging fair gender portrayal and the use of non-sexist language in media programmes.

29. *Obstacles*. Negative, violent and/or degrading images of women, including pornography and stereotyped portrayals, have increased in different forms using new communication technologies in some instances, and bias against women remains in the media. Poverty, the lack of access and opportunities, illiteracy, lack of computer literacy and language barriers, prevent some women from using the information and communication technologies, including the Internet. Development of and access to Internet infrastructure is limited, especially in developing countries and particularly for women.

K. Women and the environment

30. *Achievements*. Some national environment policies and programmes have incorporated gender perspectives. In recognition of the link between gender equality, poverty eradication, sustainable development and environment protection, Governments have included income-generating activities for women, as well as training in natural resource management and environmental protection in their development strategies. Projects have been launched to preserve and utilize women's traditional

ecological knowledge, including the traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous women, in the management of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity.

31. *Obstacles*. There is still a lack of public awareness about environmental risks faced by women and of the benefits of gender equality for promoting environmental protection. Women's limited access to technical skills, resources and information, in particular in developing countries, due to, inter alia, gender inequality, has impeded women's effective participation in decision-making, regarding the sustainable environment, including at the international level. Research, action, targeted strategies and public awareness remain limited regarding the differential impacts and implications of environmental problems for women and men. Real solutions to environmental problems, including environmental degradation, need to address the root causes of these problems, such as foreign occupation. Environmental policies and programmes lack a gender perspective and fail to take into account women's roles and contributions to environmental sustainability.

L. The girl child

32. *Achievements*. Some progress was made in primary and, to a lesser extent, secondary and tertiary education for girls, owing to the creation of a more gender-sensitive school environment, improved educational infrastructure, increased enrolment and retention, support mechanisms for pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers, increased non-formal education opportunities and enhanced attendance at science and technology classes. Increased attention was given to the health of the girl child, including the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents. An increasing number of countries introduced legislation to ban female genital mutilation and imposed heavier penalties on those involved in sexual abuse, trafficking and all other forms of exploitation of the girl child, including for commercial ends. A recent achievement has been the adoption of the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on involvement of children in armed conflict[14] and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.[15]

33. *Obstacles*. The persistence of poverty, discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls, negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls, as well as negative stereotyping of girls and boys, which limits girls' potential, and inadequate awareness of the specific situation of the girl child, child labour and the heavy burden of domestic responsibilities on girls, inadequate nutrition and access to health services, and lack of finance, which often prevent them from pursuing and completing their education and training, have contributed to a lack of opportunities and possibilities for girls to become confident and self-reliant, and independent adults. Poverty, lack of parental support and guidance, lack of information and education, abuse and all forms of exploitation of, and violence against, the girl child in many cases result in unwanted pregnancies and transmission of HIV, which may also lead to a restriction of educational opportunities. Programmes for the girl child were hindered by a lack of or an insufficient allocation of financial and human resources. There were few established national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, coordination among responsible institutions was insufficient. The increased awareness of the health needs, including the sexual and reproductive health needs, of adolescents has not yet resulted in sufficient provision of necessary information and services. Despite advances in legal protection, there is increased sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of the girl child. Adolescents continue to lack the education and service needed to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality.

III. Current challenges affecting the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

34. The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action occurred in a rapidly changing global context. Since 1995, a number of issues have gained prominence and acquired new dimensions which pose additional challenges to the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the realization of gender equality, development

[14] Resolution 54/263, annex I.

[15] Ibid., annex II.

and peace by Governments, intergovernmental bodies, international organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations as appropriate. Continued political commitment to gender equality at all levels is needed for the full implementation of the Platform for Action.

35. Globalization has presented new challenges for the fulfilment of the commitments and the realization of the goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The globalization process has, in some countries, resulted in policy shifts in favour of more open trade and financial flows, privatization of State-owned enterprises and in many cases lower public spending, particularly on social services. This change has transformed patterns of production and accelerated technological advances in information and communication and affected the lives of women, both as workers and consumers. In a large number of countries, particularly in developing and least developed countries, these changes have also adversely impacted on the lives of women and have increased inequality. The gender impact of these changes has not been systematically evaluated. Globalization also has cultural, political and social impacts affecting cultural values, lifestyles and forms of communication as well as implications for the achievement of sustainable development. The benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed, leading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality, including through often deteriorating work conditions and unsafe working environments, especially in the informal economy and rural areas. While globalization has brought greater economic opportunities and autonomy to some women, many others have been marginalized and deprived of the benefits of this process, owing to deepening inequalities among and within countries. Although in many countries the level of participation of women in the labour force has risen, in other cases the application of certain economic policies has had such a negative impact that increases in women's employment often have not been matched by improvements in wages, promotions and working conditions. In many cases, women continue to be employed in low-paid part-time and contract jobs marked by insecurity and by safety and health hazards. In many countries, women, especially new entrants into the labour market, continue to be among the first to lose jobs and the last to be rehired.

36. Increasing economic disparities among and within countries, coupled with a growing economic interdependence and dependence of States on external factors as well as financial crises have, in recent years, altered prospects for growth and caused economic instability in many countries, with a heavy impact on the lives of women. These difficulties have affected the ability of States to provide social protection and social security as well as funding for the implementation of the Platform for Action. Such difficulties are also reflected in the shift of the cost of social protection, social security and other welfare provisions from the public sector to the household. The decreasing levels of funding available through international cooperation has contributed to further marginalization of a large number of developing countries and countries with economies in transition within which women are among the poorest. The agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance has not been achieved. These factors have contributed to the increasing feminization of poverty, which has undermined efforts to achieve gender equality. Limited funding at the State level makes it imperative that innovative approaches to the allocation of existing resources be employed, not only by Governments but also by non- governmental organizations and the private sector. One such innovation is the gender analysis of public budgets, which is emerging as an important tool for determining the differential impact of expenditures on women and men to help ensure equitable use of existing resources. This analysis is crucial to promote gender equality.

37. The impact of globalization and structural adjustment programmes, the high costs of external debt servicing and declining terms of international trade in several developing countries have worsened the existing obstacles to development, aggravating the feminization of poverty. Negative consequences of structural adjustment programmes, stemming from inappropriate design and application, have continued to place a disproportionate burden on women, inter alia, through budget cuts in basic social services, including education and health.

38. There is a greater acceptance that the increasing debt burden faced by most developing countries is unsustainable and constitutes one of the principal obstacles to achieving progress in people-centred sustainable development and poverty eradication. For many developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, excessive debt servicing has severely constrained their capacity to promote social development and provide basic services and has affected full implementation of the Platform for Action.

39. In countries with economies in transition, women are bearing most of the hardships induced by the economic restructuring and are the first to lose jobs in times of recession. They are being squeezed out from fast-growth sectors. Loss of childcare facilities due to elimination or privatization of State work places, increased need for older care without the corresponding facilities and continuing inequality of access to training for finding re-employment and to productive assets for entering or expanding businesses are current challenges facing women in these countries.

40. Science and technology, as fundamental components of development, are transforming patterns of production, contributing to the creation of jobs and new job classifications, and ways of working, and contributing to the establishment of a knowledge-based society. Technological change can bring new opportunities for all women in all fields, if they have equal access and adequate training. Women should also be actively involved in the definition, design, development, implementation and gender impact evaluation of policies related to these changes. Many women worldwide are yet to use effectively these new communications technologies for networking, advocacy, exchange of information, business, education, media consultation and e-commerce initiatives. For instance, millions of the world's poorest women and men still do not have access to and benefits from science and technology and are currently excluded from this new field and the opportunities it presents.

41. The patterns of migratory flows of labour are changing. Women and girls are increasingly involved in internal, regional and international labour migration to pursue many occupations, mainly in farm labour, domestic work and some forms of entertainment work. While this situation increases their earning opportunities and self-reliance, it also exposes them, particularly the poor, uneducated, unskilled and/or undocumented migrants, to inadequate working conditions, increased health risk, the risk of trafficking, economic and sexual exploitation, racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, and other forms of abuse, which impair their enjoyment of their human rights and, in some cases, constitute violations of human rights.

42. While recognizing that Governments have the primary responsibility to develop and implement policies to promote gender equality, partnerships between Governments and different actors of civil society are increasingly recognized as an important mechanism to achieve this goal. Additional innovative approaches can be further developed to foster this collaboration.

43. In some countries, current demographic trends show that lowered fertility rates, increased life expectancy and lower mortality rates have contributed to the ageing of the population, and increase in chronic health conditions has implications for health-care systems and spending, informal care systems and research. Given the gap between male and female life expectancy, the number of widows and older single women has increased considerably, often leading to their social isolation and other social challenges. Societies have much to gain from the knowledge and life experience of older women. On the other hand, the current generation of young people is the largest in history. Adolescent girls and young women have particular needs which will require increasing attention.

44. The rapid progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly in the developing world, has had a devastating impact on women. Responsible behaviour and gender equality are among the important prerequisites for its prevention. There is also the need for more effective strategies to empower women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, to protect themselves from high risk and irresponsible behaviour leading to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and to promote responsible, safe and respectful behaviour by men and to also promote gender equality. HIV/AIDS is an urgent public health issue, is outstripping efforts to contain it and, in many countries, is reversing hard-won gains of development. The burden of care for people living with HIV/AIDS and for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS falls particularly on women as infrastructures are inadequate to respond to the challenges being posed. Women with HIV/AIDS often suffer from discrimination and stigma and are often victims of violence. Issues related to prevention, mother-to-child transmission of HIV, breastfeeding, information and education in particular of youth, curbing high-risk behaviour, intravenous drug users, support groups, counselling and voluntary testing, partner notification and provision and high cost of essential drugs have not been sufficiently addressed. There are positive signs in the fight against HIV/AIDS in some countries that behavioural changes have occurred among young people, and experience shows that educational programmes for young people

can lead to a more positive view on gender relations and gender equality, delayed sexual initiation and reduced risk of sexually transmitted infections.

45. Growing drug and substance abuse among young women and girls, both in developed and developing countries, has raised the need for increased efforts towards demand reduction and fight against illicit production, supply and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

46. The increase in casualties and damage caused by natural disasters has raised awareness of the inefficiencies and inadequacies of the existing approaches and intervention methods in responding to such emergency situations, in which women, more often than men, are burdened with the responsibility of meeting the immediate daily needs of their families. This situation has raised awareness that a gender perspective must be incorporated whenever disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery strategies are being developed and implemented.

47. The changing context of gender relations, as well as the discussion on gender equality, has led to an increased reassessment of gender roles. This has further encouraged a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of women and men working together towards gender equality and the need for changing those stereotypical and traditional roles that limit women's full potential. There is a need for balanced participation between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work. Failure to recognize and measure in quantitative terms unremunerated work of women, which is often not valued in national accounts, has meant that women's full contribution to social and economic development remains underestimated and undervalued. As long as there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities with men, the combination of remunerated work and caregiving will lead to the continued disproportionate burden for women in comparison to men.

IV. Actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

48. In view of the evaluation of progress made in the five years since the Fourth World Conference on Women in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as contained in section II above, as well as the current challenges affecting its full realization, as outlined in section III above, Governments now recommit themselves to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and also commit themselves to further actions and initiatives to overcome the obstacles and address the challenges. Governments, in taking continued and additional steps to achieve the goals of the Platform for Action, recognize that all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social, including the right to development – are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and are essential for realizing gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

49. Organizations of the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as the World Trade Organization, other international and regional intergovernmental bodies, parliaments and civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders, are called upon to support government efforts and, where appropriate, develop complementary programmes of their own to achieve full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action.

50. Governments and intergovernmental organizations recognize the contribution and complementary role of non-governmental organizations, with full respect for their autonomy, in ensuring the effective implementation of the Platform for Action, and should continue to strengthen partnerships with non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations, in contributing to the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Platform for Action.

51. Experience has shown that the goal of gender equality can be fully achieved only in the context of renewed relations among different stakeholders at all levels. The full, effective participation of women on the basis of equality in all spheres of society is necessary to contribute to this goal.

52. Achieving gender equality and empowerment of women requires redressing inequalities between women and men and girls and boys and ensuring their equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and possibilities. Gender equality implies that women's needs, interests, concerns, experiences and priorities

as well as men's are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, national monitoring, and follow-up and evaluation, including at the international level, of all actions in all areas.

53. By adopting the Platform for Action, Governments and the international community agreed to a common development agenda with gender equality and women's empowerment as underlying principles. The efforts towards ensuring women's participation in development have expanded and need to combine a focus on women's conditions and basic needs with a holistic approach based on equal rights and partnerships, promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Policies and programmes should be formulated to achieve the goal of people-centred sustainable development, secure livelihoods and adequate social protection measures, including safety nets, strengthened support systems for families, equal access to and control over financial and economic resources, and to eliminate increasing and disproportionate poverty among women. All economic policies and institutions as well as those responsible for resource allocation should adopt a gender perspective to ensure that development dividends are shared on equal grounds.

54. Given the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women in many countries, particularly in developing countries, it is essential to continue from a gender perspective to review, modify and implement integrated macroeconomic and social policies and programmes, including those related to structural adjustment and external debt problems, to ensure universal and equitable access to social services, in particular to education and affordable quality health-care services and equal access to and control over economic resources.

55. Increased efforts are needed to provide equal access to education, health and social services and to ensure women's and girls' rights to education and the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and well-being throughout the life cycle, as well as adequate, affordable and universally accessible health care and services, including sexual and reproductive health, particularly in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; they are also necessary with regard to the growing proportion of older women.

56. Given that a majority of the world's women are subsistence producers and users of environmental resources, there is a need to recognize and integrate women's knowledge and priorities in the conservation and management of such resources to ensure their sustainability. Programmes and infrastructures that are gender-sensitive are needed in order to respond effectively to disaster and emergency situations that threaten the environment, livelihood security, as well as the management of the basic requirements of daily life.

57. Sustaining the livelihoods of populations in States with limited or scarce resources, including small island developing States, is critically dependent on the preservation and protection of the environment. Women's customary knowledge, management and sustainable use of biodiversity should be recognized.

58. Political will and commitment at all levels are crucial to ensure mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the adoption and implementation of comprehensive and action-oriented policies in all areas. Policy commitments are essential for further developing the necessary framework which ensures women's equal access to and control over economic and financial resources, training, services and institutions as well as their participation in decision-making and management. Policy-making processes require the partnership of women and men at all levels. Men and boys should also be actively involved and encouraged in all efforts to achieve the goals of the Platform for Action and its implementation.

59. Violence against women and girls is a major obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of gender equality, development and peace. Violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Gender-based violence, such as battering and other domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual slavery and exploitation, international trafficking in women and children, forced prostitution and sexual harassment, as well as violence against women resulting from cultural prejudice, racism and racial discrimination, xenophobia, pornography, ethnic cleansing, armed conflict, foreign occupation, religious and anti-religious extremism and terrorism are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and must be combated and eliminated.

60. Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and is a strong force for social cohesion and integration and, as such, should be strengthened. The inadequate support to women and insufficient protection and support to their respective families affect society as a whole and undermine efforts to achieve gender equality. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist and the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected. Women's social and economic contributions to the welfare of the family and the social significance of maternity and paternity continue to be inadequately addressed. Motherhood and fatherhood and the role of parents and legal guardians in the family and in the upbringing of children and the importance of all family members to the family's well-being are also acknowledged and must not be a basis for discrimination. Women also continue to bear a disproportionate share of the household responsibilities and the care of children, the sick and the elderly. Such imbalance needs to be consistently addressed through appropriate policies and programmes, in particular those geared towards education, and through legislation where appropriate. In order to achieve full partnership, both in public and in private spheres, both women and men must be enabled to reconcile and share equally work responsibilities and family responsibilities.

61. Strong national machineries for the advancement of women and promotion of gender equality require political commitment at the highest level and all necessary human and financial resources to initiate, recommend and facilitate the development, adoption and monitoring of policies, legislation, programmes and capacity-building for the empowerment of women and to act as catalysts for open public dialogue on gender equality as a societal goal. This would enable them to promote the advancement of women and mainstream a gender perspective in policies and programmes in all areas, to play an advocacy role and to ensure equal access to all institutions and resources, as well as enhanced capacity-building for women in all sectors. Reforms to meet the challenges of the changing world are essential to ensure women's equal access to institutions and organizations. Institutional and conceptual changes are a strategic and important aspect of creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Platform for Action.

62. Programme support to enhance women's opportunities, potentials and activities need to have a dual focus: on the one hand, programmes aimed at meeting the basic as well as the specific needs of women for capacity-building, organizational development and empowerment, and on the other, gender mainstreaming in all programme formulation and implementation activities. It is particularly important to expand into new areas of programming to advance gender equality in response to current challenges.

63. Girls and women of all ages with any form of disability are generally among the more vulnerable and marginalized of society. There is therefore need to take into account and to address their concerns in all policy-making and programming. Special measures are needed at all levels to integrate them into the mainstream of development.

64. Effective and coordinated plans and programmes for the full implementation of the Platform for Action require a clear knowledge of the situation of women and girls, clear research-based knowledge and data disaggregated by sex, short- and long-term time-bound targets and measurable goals, and follow-up mechanisms to assess progress. Efforts are needed to ensure capacity-building for all actors involved in the achievement of these goals. Efforts are also needed at the national level to increase transparency and accountability.

65. The realization and the achievement of the goals of gender equality, development and peace need to be supported by the allocation of necessary human, financial and material resources for specific and targeted activities to ensure gender equality at the local, national, regional and international levels as well as by enhanced and increased international cooperation. Explicit attention to these goals in the budgetary processes at the national, regional and international levels is essential.

A. Actions to be taken at the national level

By Governments:

66. (*a*) Set and encourage the use of explicit short- and long-term time-bound targets or measurable goals, including, where appropriate, quotas, to promote progress towards gender balance,

including women's equal access to and full participation on a basis of equality with men in all areas and at all levels of public life, especially in decision- and policy-making positions, in political parties and political activities, in all government ministries and at key policy-making institutions, as well as in local development bodies and authorities;

(*b*) Address the barriers faced by women, particularly by indigenous and other marginalized women, in accessing and participating in politics and decision-making, including lack of training, women's double burden of paid and unpaid work, negative societal attitudes and stereotypes.

67. (*a*) Ensure policies that guarantee equal access to education and the elimination of gender disparities in education, including vocational training, science and technology and completion of basic education for girls, especially for those living in rural and deprived areas, and opportunities for continuing education at all levels for all women and girls;

(*b*) Support the implementation of plans and programmes of action to ensure quality education and improved enrolment retention rates for boys and girls and the elimination of gender discrimination and gender stereotypes in educational curricula and materials, as well as in the process of education;

(*c*) Accelerate action and strengthen political commitment to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to ensure free compulsory and universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015, as advocated by several global conferences, and eliminate policies that have been proven to worsen and perpetuate the gap;

(*d*) Develop a gender-sensitive curriculum from kindergarten to elementary schools to vocational training and universities in order to address gender stereotyping as one of the root causes of segregation in working life.

68. (*a*) Design and implement policies that promote and protect women's enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and create an environment that does not tolerate violations of the rights of women and girls;

(*b*) Create and maintain a non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive legal environment by reviewing legislation with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions as soon as possible, preferably by 2005, and eliminating legislative gaps that leave women and girls without protection of their rights and without effective recourse against gender-based discrimination;

(*c*) Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[12] limit the extent of any reservations to it, and withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention or otherwise incompatible with international treaty law;

(*d*) Consider signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;[13]

(*e*) Consider signing and ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;[11]

(*f*) Develop, review and implement laws and procedures to prohibit and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls;

(*g*) Take measures, including programmes and policies, to ensure that maternity, motherhood and parenting and the role of women in procreation are not used as a basis for discrimination nor restrict the full participation of women in society;

(*h*) Ensure that national legislative and administrative reform processes, including those linked to land reform, decentralization and reorientation of the economy, promote women's rights, particularly those of rural women and women living in poverty, and take measures to promote and implement those rights through women's equal access to and control over economic resources, including land, property rights, right to inheritance, credit and traditional saving schemes, such as women's banks and cooperatives;

(*i*) Mainstream a gender perspective into national immigration and asylum policies, regulations and practices, as appropriate, in order to promote and protect the rights of all women,

including the consideration of steps to recognize gender-related persecution and violence when assessing grounds for granting refugee status and asylum;

(*j*) Take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against women and girls by any person, organization or enterprise;

(*k*) Take necessary measures for the private sector and educational establishments to facilitate and strengthen compliance with non-discriminatory legislation.

69. (*a*) As a matter of priority, review and revise legislation, where appropriate, with a view to introducing effective legislation, including on violence against women, and take other necessary measures to ensure that all women and girls are protected against all forms of physical, psychological and sexual violence, and are provided recourse to justice;

(*b*) Prosecute the perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls and sentence them appropriately, and introduce actions aimed at helping and motivating perpetrators to break the cycle of violence and take measures to provide avenues for redress to victims;

(*c*) Treat all forms of violence against women and girls of all ages as a criminal offence punishable by law, including violence based on all forms of discrimination;

(*d*) Establish legislation and/or strengthen appropriate mechanisms to handle criminal matters relating to all forms of domestic violence, including marital rape and sexual abuse of women and girls, and ensure that such cases are brought to justice swiftly;

(*e*) Develop, adopt and fully implement laws and other measures, as appropriate, such as policies and educational programmes, to eradicate harmful customary or traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and so-called honour crimes, which are violations of the human rights of women and girls and obstacles to the full enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and intensify efforts, in cooperation with local women's groups, to raise collective and individual awareness on how these harmful traditional or customary practices violate women's human rights;

(*f*) Continue to undertake research to develop a better understanding of the root causes of all forms of violence against women in order to design programmes and take measures towards eliminating those forms of violence;

(*g*) Take measures to address through policies and programmes, racism and racially motivated violence against women and girls;

(*h*) Take concrete steps, as a priority and with their full and voluntary participation, to address the impact of violence on indigenous women in order to implement appropriate, effective programmes and services to eliminate all forms of violence;

(*i*) Promote women's and girls' mental well-being, integrate mental health services into primary health-care systems, develop gender-sensitive supportive programmes and train health workers to recognize gender-based violence and provide care for girls and women of all ages who have experienced any form of violence;

(*j*) Adopt and promote a holistic approach to respond to all forms of violence and abuse against girls and women of all ages, including girls and women with disabilities, as well as vulnerable and marginalized women and girls in order to address their diverse needs, including education, provision of appropriate health care and services and basic social services;

(*k*) Approve and promote a holistic approach to combat violence against women during all their life cycle and circumstances.

70. (*a*) Take appropriate measures to address the root factors, including external factors, that encourage trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriages and forced labour in order to eliminate trafficking in women, including by strengthening existing legislations with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and to punishing the perpetrators, through both criminal and civil measures;

(*b*) Devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls through a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy consisting of, inter alia, legislative measures, prevention campaigns, information exchange, assistance and protection for and reintegration of the victims and prosecution of all the offenders involved, including intermediaries;

(*c*) Consider preventing, within the legal framework and in accordance with national policies, victims of trafficking, in particular women and girls, from being prosecuted for their illegal entry or residence, taking into account that they are victims of exploitation;

(*d*) Consider setting up or strengthening a national coordinating mechanism, for example, a national rapporteur or an inter-agency body, with the participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to encourage the exchange of information and to report on data, root causes, factors and trends in violence against women, in particular trafficking;

(*e*) Provide protection and support to women and their respective families and develop and strengthen policies to support family security.

71. (*a*) Consider adopting, where appropriate, national legislation consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity[16] to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of women in indigenous and local communities relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies;

(*b*) Adapt environmental and agricultural policies and mechanisms, when necessary, to incorporate a gender perspective, and in cooperation with civil society, support farmers, particularly women farmers and those living in rural areas, with education and training programmes.

72. (*a*) Adopt policies and implement measures to address, on a prioritized basis, the gender aspects of emerging and continued health challenges, such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other diseases having a disproportionate impact on women's health, including those resulting in the highest mortality and morbidity rates;

(*b*) Ensure that the reduction of maternal morbidity and mortality is a health sector priority and that women have ready access to essential obstetric care, well-equipped and adequately staffed maternal health-care services, skilled attendance at delivery, emergency obstetric care, effective referral and transport to higher levels of care when necessary, post-partum care and family planning in order to, inter alia, promote safe motherhood, and give priority attention to measures to prevent, detect and treat breast, cervical and ovarian cancer and osteoporosis, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

(*c*) Take measures to meet the unmet needs in good quality family planning services and in contraception, namely regarding the existing gap in services, supplies and use;

(*d*) Collect and disseminate updated and reliable data on mortality and morbidity of women and conduct further research regarding how social and economic factors affect the health of girls and women of all ages, as well as research about the provision of health-care services to girls and women and the patterns of use of such services and the value of disease prevention and health promotion programmes for women;

(*e*) Ensure universal and equal access for women and men throughout the life-cycle, to social services related to health care, including education, clean water and safe sanitation, nutrition, food security and health education programmes;

(*f*) Ensure the provision of safe working conditions for health-care workers;

(*g*) Adopt, enact, review and revise, where necessary or appropriate, and implement health legislation, policies and programmes, in consultation with women's organizations and other actors of civil society, and allocate the necessary budgetary resources to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, so that all women have full and equal access to comprehensive, high-

[16] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institute Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

quality and affordable health care, information, education and services throughout their life cycle; reflect the new demands for service and care by women and girls as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and new knowledge about women's needs for specific mental and occupation health programmes and for the ageing process; and protect and promote human rights by ensuring that all health services and workers conform to ethical, professional and gender-sensitive standards in the delivery of women's health services, including by establishing or strengthening, as appropriate, regulatory and enforcement mechanisms;

(*h*) Eliminate discrimination against all women and girls in the access to health information, education and health care and health services;

(*i*) Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. Implicit in this last condition is the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law, and the right of access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant. In line with the above definition of reproductive health, reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques and services that contribute to reproductive health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems. It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases;

(*j*) Given the above definition, reproductive rights embrace certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents. These rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include their right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents. In the exercise of these rights, they should take into account the needs of their living and future children and their responsibilities towards the community. The promotion of the responsible exercise of these rights for all people should be the fundamental basis for government- and community-supported policies and programmes in the area of reproductive health, including family planning. As part of their commitment, full attention should be given to the promotion of mutually respectful and equitable gender relations and particularly to meeting the educational and service needs of adolescents to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality. Reproductive health eludes many of the world's people because of such factors as inadequate levels of knowledge about human sexuality and inappropriate or poor-quality reproductive health information and services; the prevalence of high-risk sexual behaviour; discriminatory social practices; negative attitudes towards women and girls; and the limited power many women and girls have over their sexual and reproductive lives. In most countries, adolescents are particularly vulnerable because of their lack of information and access to relevant services. Older women and men have distinct reproductive and sexual health issues which are often inadequately addressed;

(*k*) The human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. Equal relationships between women and men in matters of sexual relations and reproduction, including full respect for the integrity of the person, require mutual respect, consent and shared responsibility for sexual behaviour and its consequences;

(*l*) Design and implement programmes to encourage and enable men to adopt safe and responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour, and to use effectively methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS;

(*m*) Take all appropriate measures to eliminate harmful, medically unnecessary or coercive medical interventions as well as inappropriate medication and overmedication of women and ensure that all women are properly informed of their options, including likely benefits and potential side effects, by properly trained personnel;

(*n*) Adopt measures to ensure non-discrimination against and respect for the privacy of those living with HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, including women and young people, so that they are not denied the information needed to prevent further transmission of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases and are able to access treatment and care services without fear of stigmatization, discrimination or violence;

(*o*) In the light of paragraph 8.25 of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[8] which states:

> "In no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning. All Governments and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are urged to strengthen their commitment to women's health, to deal with the health impact of unsafe abortion[20] as a major public health concern and to reduce the recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family-planning services. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies must always be given the highest priority and every attempt should be made to eliminate the need for abortion. Women who have unwanted pregnancies should have ready access to reliable information and compassionate counselling. Any measures or changes related to abortion within the health system can only be determined at the national or local level according to the national legislative process. In circumstances where abortion is not against the law, such abortion should be safe. In all cases, women should have access to quality services for the management of complications arising from abortion. Post-abortion counselling, education and family-planning services should be offered promptly, which will also help to avoid repeat abortions.

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[20] Unsafe abortion is defined as a procedure for terminating an unwanted pregnancy either by persons lacking the necessary skills or in an environment lacking the minimal medical standards or both (based on World Health Organization, *The Prevention and Management of Unsafe Abortion*, Report of a Technical Working Group, Geneva, April 1992 (WHO/MSM/92.5))".

consider reviewing laws containing punitive measures against women who have undergone illegal abortions;

(*p*) Promote and improve comprehensive gender-specific tobacco prevention and control strategies for all women, particularly adolescent girls and pregnant women, which would include education, prevention and cessation programmes and services, and the reduction of people's exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, and support the development of the World Health Organization international framework convention on tobacco control;

(*q*) Promote or improve information programmes and measures including treatment for the elimination of the increasing substance abuse among women and adolescent girls, including information campaigns about the risks to health and other consequences and its impact on families.

73. (*a*) Mainstream a gender perspective into key macroeconomic and social development policies and national development programmes;

(*b*) Incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and establish adequate budgetary allocations to support gender equality and development programmes that enhance women's empowerment and develop the necessary analytical and methodological tools and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation;

(*c*) Increase, as appropriate, and effectively utilize financial and other resources in the social sector, particularly in education and health, to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment as a central strategy for addressing development and poverty eradication;

(*d*) Strive to reduce the disproportionate number of women living in poverty, in particular rural women, by implementing national poverty eradication programmes with a focus on a gender perspective and the empowerment of women, including short- and long-term goals.

74. (*a*) Undertake socio-economic policies that promote sustainable development and support and ensure poverty eradication programmes, especially for women, by, inter alia, providing skills training, equal access to and control over resources, finance, credit, including microcredit, information and technology, and equal access to markets to benefit women of all ages, in particular those living in poverty and marginalized women, including rural women, indigenous women and female-headed households;

(*b*) Create and ensure access to social protection systems, taking into account the specific needs of all women living in poverty, demographic changes and changes in society, to provide safeguards against the uncertainties and changes in conditions of work associated with globalization, and strive to ensure that new, flexible and emerging forms of work are adequately covered by social protection;

(*c*) Continue to review, modify and implement macroeconomic and social policies and programmes, inter alia, through an analysis from a gender perspective of those related to structural adjustment and external debt problems, in order to ensure women's equal access to resources and universal access to basic social services.

75. Facilitate employment for women through, inter alia, promotion of adequate social protection, simplification of administrative procedures, removal of fiscal obstacles, where appropriate, and other measures, such as access to risk capital, credit schemes, microcredit and other funding, facilitating the establishment of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises.

76. (*a*) Establish or reinforce existing institutional mechanisms at all levels to work with national machineries to strengthen societal support for gender equality, in cooperation with civil society, particularly women's non-governmental organizations;

(*b*) Take action at the highest levels for the continued advancement of women, in particular by strengthening national machineries to mainstream the gender perspective to accelerate the empowerment of women in all areas and to ensure commitment to gender equality policies;

(*c*) Provide national machineries with the necessary human and financial resources, including through exploring innovative funding schemes, so that gender mainstreaming is integrated into all policies, programmes and projects;

(*d*) Consider establishing effective commissions or other institutions to promote equal opportunities;

(*e*) Strengthen efforts to implement fully national action plans developed for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and, when necessary, adjust or develop national plans for the future;

(*f*) Ensure that the design of all government information policies and strategies is gender-sensitive.

77. (*a*) Provide national statistical offices with institutional and financial support so that they may collect, compile and disseminate data disaggregated by sex, age and other factors, as appropriate, in formats that are accessible to the public and to policy makers for, inter alia, gender-based analysis, monitoring and impact assessment, and support new work to develop statistics and indicators, especially in areas where information is particularly lacking;

(*b*) Regularly compile and publish crime statistics, and monitor trends in law enforcement concerning violations of the rights of women and girls to increase awareness in order to develop more effective policies;

(*c*) Develop national capacity to undertake policy-oriented and gender-related research and impact studies by universities and national research/training institutes to enable gender-specific knowledge-based policy-making.

B. Further actions to be taken at the national level

By Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society:

78. (*a*) Encourage the creation of training and legal literacy programmes which build and support the capacities of women's organizations to advocate for women's and girls' human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(*b*) Encourage collaboration, where appropriate, among Governments, non-governmental organizations, grass-roots organizations and traditional and community leaders for the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, the dignity and worth of the human person and equal rights for women and men;

(*c*) Encourage cooperation between governmental authorities, parliamentarians and other relevant authorities and women's organizations, including non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, in ensuring that legislation is non-discriminatory;

(*d*) Provide gender-sensitive training to all actors, including police, prosecutors and the judiciary, in dealing with victims of violence, particularly women and girls, including sexual violence.

79. (*a*) Adopt a holistic approach to women's physical and mental health throughout the life cycle, take further measures to redesign health information, services and training for health workers in order to make them gender-sensitive, promote gender balance at all levels of the health-care system, and reflect women's perspective and right to privacy, confidentiality, voluntary and informed consent;

(*b*) Reinforce efforts to ensure universal access to high quality primary health care throughout the life cycle, including sexual and reproductive health care, no later than 2015;

(*c*) Review and revise national policies, programmes and legislation to implement the key actions[7] for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[8] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-first special session, paying particular attention to achieving the specific benchmarks to reduce maternal mortality, to increase the proportion of births assisted by skilled attendants, to provide the widest achievable range of safe and effective family planning and contraceptive methods and to reduce young people's risk of HIV/AIDS;

(*d*) Strengthen measures to improve the nutritional status of all girls and women, recognizing the effects of severe and moderate malnutrition, the lifelong implications of nutrition and the link between mother and child health, by promoting and enhancing support for programmes to reduce malnutrition, such as school meal programmes, mother-child-nutrition programmes and micronutrient supplementation, giving special attention to bridging the gender gap in nutrition;

(*e*) Review with the full participation of women and monitor the impact of health-sector reform initiatives on women's health and their enjoyment of human rights, in particular with regard to rural and urban health service delivery to women living in poverty, and ensure that reforms secure full and equal access to available, affordable and high-quality health care and services for all women, taking into account the diverse needs of women;

(*f*) Design and implement programmes with the full involvement of adolescents, as appropriate, to provide them with education, information and appropriate, specific, user-friendly and accessible services, without discrimination, to address effectively their reproductive and sexual health needs, taking into account their right to privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent, and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[17] in conformity with the Convention on

[17] Resolution 44/25, annex.

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[12] and ensuring that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child are a primary consideration. These programmes should, inter alia, build adolescent girls' self-esteem and help them take responsibility for their own lives; promote gender equality and responsible sexual behaviour; raise awareness about, prevent and treat sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and sexual violence and abuse; and counsel adolescents on avoiding unwanted and early pregnancies;

(*g*) Design and implement programmes to provide social services and support to pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers, in particular to enable them to continue and complete their education;

(*h*) Give particular attention to developing and improving access to improved and new technologies and to safe and affordable drugs and treatments to meet women's health needs, including cardiopulmonary diseases, hypertension, osteoporosis, breast, cervical and ovarian cancer and family planning and contraceptive methods, for both women and men.

80. Develop and use frameworks, guidelines and other practical tools and indicators to accelerate gender mainstreaming, including gender-based research, analytical tools and methodologies, training, case studies, statistics and information.

81. (*a*) Provide equal opportunities and favourable conditions for women of all ages and backgrounds on equal terms with men by encouraging their entry into politics and their participation at all levels;

(*b*) Encourage the nomination of more women candidates, inter alia, through political parties, quotas or measurable goals or other appropriate means for election to parliaments and other legislative structures, to increase their share and contribution in the formulation of public policy;

(*c*) Develop and maintain consultative processes and mechanisms, in partnership with women's organizations, including non-governmental organizations and community groups, to ensure that all women, with particular attention to those who face particular barriers to their participation in public life, are fully involved in and informed about decisions that impact their lives.

82. (*a*) Promote and protect the rights of women workers and take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work, addressing, inter alia, gender bias in recruitment; working conditions; occupational segregation and harassment; discrimination in social protection benefits; women's occupational health and safety; unequal career opportunities and inadequate sharing, by men, of family responsibilities;

(*b*) Promote programmes to enable women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and child-care responsibilities;

(*c*) Develop or strengthen policies and programmes to support the multiple roles of women in contributing to the welfare of the family in its various forms, which acknowledge the social significance of maternity and motherhood, parenting, the role of parents and legal guardians in the upbringing of children and caring for other family members. Such policies and programmes should also promote shared responsibility of parents, women and men and society as a whole in this regard;

(*d*) Design, implement and promote family friendly policies and services, including affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependants, parental and other leave schemes and campaigns to sensitize public opinion and other relevant actors on equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities between women and men;

(*e*) Develop policies and programmes to enhance the employability of women and their access to quality jobs, through improving access to formal, non-formal and vocational training, lifelong learning and retraining, long-distance education, including in information and communications technology and entrepreneurial skills, particularly in developing countries, to support women's empowerment in the different stages of their lives;

(*f*) Take action to increase women's participation and to bring about a balanced representation of women and men in all sectors and occupations in the labour market, inter alia, by encouraging the creation or expansion of institutional networks to support the career development and promotion of women;

(*g*) Develop and/or strengthen programmes and policies to support women entrepreneurs, including those engaged in new enterprises, through access to information, training, including vocational training, new technologies, networks, credit and financial services;

(*h*) Initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and to diminish differentials in incomes between women and men;

(*i*) Encourage and support the education of girls in science, mathematics, new technologies, including information technologies, and technical subjects, and encourage women, including through career advising, to seek employment in high-growth and high-wage sectors and jobs;

(*j*) Develop policies and implement programmes, particularly for men and boys, on changing stereotypical attitudes and behaviours concerning gender roles and responsibilities to promote gender equality and positive attitudes and behaviour;

(*k*) Strengthen gender-awareness campaigns and gender equality training among women and men, girls and boys to eliminate the persistence of harmful stereotypes;

(*l*) Analyse and respond, as necessary, to the major reasons why men and women may be affected differently by the process of job creation and retrenchment associated with economic transition and structural transformation of the economy, including globalization;

(*m*) Promote gender-sensitivity and social responsibility of the private sector, inter alia, through the management of work time and dissemination of gender-sensitive information and advocacy campaigns.

83. (*a*) Strengthen or establish, where appropriate, national collaborative and regular reporting mechanisms, with the participation of non-governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, to monitor progress in the implementation of national policies, programmes and benchmarks for achieving gender equality;

(*b*) Support the work of non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in helping disadvantaged women, in particular rural women, in gaining access to financial institutions in establishing businesses and other sustainable means of livelihood;

(*c*) Take measures to enable all older women to be actively engaged in all aspects of life, as well as to assume a variety of roles in communities, public life and decision-making, and develop and implement policies and programmes to ensure their full enjoyment of human rights and quality of life, as well as to address their needs, with a view to contributing to the realization of a society for all ages;

(*d*) Design and implement policies and programmes to address fully specific needs of women and girls with disabilities, to ensure their equal access to education at all levels, including technical and vocational training and adequate rehabilitation programmes, health care and services and employment opportunities, to protect and promote their human rights and, where appropriate, to eliminate existing inequalities between women and men with disabilities.

C. Actions to be taken at the international level

By the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, as appropriate:

84. (*a*) Assist Governments, at their request, in building institutional capacity and developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans for the implementation of the Platform for Action;

(*b*) Support non-governmental organizations, especially women's organizations, to build their capacity to advocate for, implement, assess and follow up the Platform for Action;

(*c*) Allocate sufficient resources to regional and national programmes to implement the Platform for Action in its twelve critical areas of concern;

(*d*) Assist Governments in countries with economies in transition to further develop and implement plans and programmes aimed at economic and political empowerment of women;

(*e*) Encourage the Economic and Social Council to request the regional commissions, within their respective mandates and resources, to build up a database to be updated regularly, in which all programmes and projects carried out in their respective regions by agencies or organizations of the United Nations system are listed, and to facilitate their dissemination, as well as the evaluation of their impact on the empowerment of women through the implementation of the Platform for Action.

85. (*a*) Continue to implement and evaluate and follow up the mandated work of the United Nations agencies, drawing on the full range of expertise available within the United Nations system, as well as agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council and other programmes and initiatives, to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies, programmes and planning of the United Nations system, including through the integrated and coordinated follow-up to all major United Nations conferences and summits, as well as to ensure the allocation of sufficient resources and maintenance of gender units and focal points to achieve this end;

(*b*) Assist countries, upon their request, in developing methods for and compiling statistics on the contributions of women and men to society and the economy, and the socio-economic situation of women and men, in particular in relation to poverty and paid and unpaid work in all sectors;

(*c*) Support national efforts, particularly in developing countries, for enlarged access to new information technology as part of the efforts to develop collaborative research, training and information dissemination, including through the Gender Awareness Information and Networking System developed by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, while at the same time supporting traditional methods of information dissemination, research and training;

(*d*) Ensure that all United Nations personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training in order to mainstream a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, and ensure appropriate follow-up to such training;

(*e*) Support the Commission on the Status of Women, within its mandate, in assessing and advancing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the follow-up thereto;

(*f*) Assist Governments, upon their request, in incorporating a gender perspective as a dimension of development into national development planning;

(*g*) Assist States parties, upon their request, in building capacity to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[12] and in this regard encourage States parties to pay attention to the concluding comments as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

86. (*a*) Assist Governments, upon request, in developing gender-sensitive strategies for the delivery of assistance and, where appropriate, responses to humanitarian crises resulting from armed conflict and natural disasters;

(*b*) Ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, and in this regard, support the involvement of women's organizations, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations;

(*c*) Encourage the involvement of women in decision-making at all levels and achieve gender balance in the appointment of women and men, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, including, as special envoys and special representatives and in pursuing good offices on behalf of the Secretary-General, inter alia, in matters relating to peacekeeping, peace-building and in operational activities, including as resident coordinators;

(*d*) Provide gender-sensitive training to all actors, as appropriate, in peacekeeping missions in dealing with victims, particularly women and girls, of violence, including sexual violence;

(*e*) Take further effective measures to remove the obstacles to the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, in particular peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, that continue to adversely affect their economic and social development.

87. (*a*) Support activities aimed at the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including by providing support for the activities of women's networks and organizations within the United Nations system;

(*b*) Consider launching an international "zero tolerance" campaign on violence against women.

88. Encourage the implementation of measures designed to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender balance in all posts, including at the Professional level and above, in particular at the higher levels in their secretariats, including in peacekeeping missions, peace negotiations and in all activities, and report thereon, as appropriate, and enhance management accountability mechanisms.

89. Take measures, with the full participation of women, to create, at all levels, an enabling environment conducive to the achievement and maintenance of world peace, for democracy and peaceful settlement of disputes, with full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development, and fundamental freedoms.

D. Actions to be taken at the national and international levels

By Governments, regional and international organizations, including the United Nations system, and international financial institutions and other actors, as appropriate:

90. Take steps with a view to the avoidance of and refrain from any unilateral measure at variance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, in particular women and children, that jeopardizes their well-being and that creates obstacles to the full enjoyment of their human rights, including the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being and their right to food, medical care and the necessary social services. Ensure that food and medicine are not used as tools for political pressure.

91. Take urgent and effective measures in accordance with international law with a view to alleviating the negative impact of economic sanctions on women and children.

92. (*a*) Promote international cooperation to support regional and national efforts in the development and use of gender-related analysis and statistics by, inter alia, providing national statistical offices, upon their request, with institutional and financial support in order to enable them to respond to requests for data disaggregated by sex and age for use by national Governments in the formulation of gender-sensitive statistical indicators for monitoring and policy and programme impact assessments, as well as to undertake regular strategic surveys;

(*b*) Develop with the full participation of all countries an international consensus on indicators and ways to measure violence against women, and consider establishing a readily accessible database on statistics, legislation, training models, good practices, lessons learned and other resources with regard to all forms of violence against women, including women migrant workers;

(*c*) In partnership, as appropriate, with relevant institutions, promote, improve, systemize and fund the collection of data disaggregated by sex, age and other appropriate factors, on health and access to health services, including comprehensive information on the impact of HIV/AIDS on women, throughout the life-cycle;

(*d*) Eliminate gender biases in bio-medical, clinical and social research, including by conducting voluntary clinical trials involving women, with due regard for their human rights, and in strict conformity with internationally accepted legal, ethical, medical, safety, and scientific standards, and gather, analyse and make available to appropriate institutions and to end-users gender-specific information about dosage, side-effects and effectiveness of drugs, including contraceptives and methods that protect against sexually transmitted infections.

93. (*a*) Develop and support the capacity of universities, national research and training institutes and other relevant research institutes to undertake gender-related and policy-oriented research in order to inform policy makers and to promote full implementation of the Platform for Action and the follow-up thereto;

(*b*) Develop a South-South cooperation programme with a view to assisting in the capacity-building of national machineries on women through, inter alia, the sharing of expertise, experiences and knowledge of national machineries on women's empowerment, gender issues and gender mainstreaming methodologies and approaches on the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action;

(*c*) Support Governments in their efforts to institute action-oriented programmes and measures to accelerate the full implementation of the Platform for Action, with time-bound targets and/or measurable goals and evaluation methods, including gender impact assessments, with full participation of women for measuring and analysing progress;

(*d*) Undertake appropriate data collection and research on indigenous women, with their full participation, in order to foster accessible, culturally and linguistically appropriate policies, programmes and services;

(*e*) Continue research on all current trends that may be creating new gender disparities in order to provide a basis for policy action.

94. (*a*) Take measures to develop and implement gender-sensitive programmes aimed at stimulating women's entrepreneurship and private initiative, and assist women-owned business in participating in and benefiting from, inter alia, international trade, technological innovation and investment;

(*b*) Respect, promote and realize the principles contained in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up,[18] and strongly consider ratification and full implementation of International Labour Organization conventions which are particularly relevant to ensuring women's rights at work;

(*c*) Encourage the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacity, including through the support of international financial institutions, so that credit and related services for self-employment and income-generating activities may be made available to an increasing number of people living in poverty, in particular women, and to further develop, where appropriate, other microfinance instruments;

(*d*) Reaffirm commitment to gender-sensitive development and support women's role in sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management;

(*e*) Adopt measures to ensure that the work of rural women, who continue to play a vital role in providing food security and nutrition and are engaged in agricultural production and enterprises related to farming, fishing and resource management and home-based work, especially in the informal sector, is recognized and valued in order to enhance their economic security, their access to and control over resources and credit schemes, services and benefits, and their empowerment.

[18] Adopted on 18 June 1998 by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-sixth session.

95. (*a*) Encourage and implement curriculum changes in training for public officials to make them fully gender-sensitive;

(*b*) Strengthen and promote programmes to support the participation of young women in youth organizations and encourage dialogue among youth between and among developed and developing countries;

(*c*) Support national efforts to promote formal and non-formal education and mentoring programmes for women and girls in order to enable them to acquire knowledge, develop self-esteem and skills in leadership, advocacy and conflict resolution;

(*d*) Undertake comprehensive actions to provide skills training for women and girls at all levels, in order to eradicate poverty, in particular the feminization of poverty, through national and international efforts;

(*e*) With the full voluntary participation of indigenous women, develop and implement educational and training programmes that respect their history, culture, spirituality, languages and aspirations and ensure their access to all levels of formal and non-formal education, including higher education;

(*f*) Continue to support and strengthen national, regional and international adult literacy programmes with international cooperation in order to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in the levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;

(*g*) Continue to examine the decline in enrolment rates and the increase in the drop-out rates of girls and boys at the primary and secondary education levels in some countries, and, with international cooperation, design appropriate national programmes to eliminate the root causes and support lifelong learning for women and girls, with a view to ensuring achievement of relevant international targets on education set by the relevant international conferences;

(*h*) Ensure equal opportunities for women and girls in cultural, recreational and sports activities, as well as in participation in athletics and physical activities at the national, regional and international levels, such as access, training, competition, remuneration and prizes;

(*i*) Continue to design efforts for the promotion of respect for cultural diversity and dialogue among and within civilizations in a manner which contributes to the implementation of the Platform for Action, which aims at the empowerment of women and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women, and in a manner which ensures that gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women are not undermined;

(*j*) Apply and support positive measures to give all women, particularly indigenous women, equal access to capacity-building and training programmes to enhance their participation in decision-making in all fields and at all levels.

96. (*a*) Increase cooperation, policy responses, effective implementation of national legislation and other protective and preventive measures aimed at the elimination of violence against women and girls, especially all forms of commercial sexual exploitation, as well as economic exploitation, including trafficking in women and children, female infanticide, crimes committed in the name of honour, crimes committed in the name of passion, racially motivated crimes, abduction and sale of children, dowry-related violence and deaths, acid attacks and harmful traditional or customary practices, such as female genital mutilation, early and forced marriages;

(*b*) Increase awareness and knowledge of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[11] which affirms that rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence constitute war crimes and, in defined circumstances, crimes against humanity, with the aim of preventing such crimes from occurring, and take measures to support the prosecution of all persons responsible for such crimes and provide avenues for redress to victims; also increase awareness of the extent to which such crimes are used as a weapon of war;

(*c*) Provide support to non-governmental organizations, in collaboration with the United Nations system, inter alia, through regional and international cooperation, including women's organizations and community groups, in addressing all forms of violence against women and girls, including for programmes to combat race and ethnic-based violence against women and girls;

(*d*) Encourage and support public campaigns, as appropriate, to enhance public awareness of the unacceptability and social costs of violence against women, and undertake prevention activities to promote healthy and balanced relationships based on gender equality.

97. (*a*) Intensify cooperation between States of origin, transit and destination to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children;

(*b*) Support the ongoing negotiations on a draft protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, to supplement the draft United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;[19]

(*c*) As appropriate, pursue and support national, regional and international strategies to reduce the risk to women and girls, including those who are refugees and displaced persons, as well as women migrant workers, of becoming victims of trafficking; strengthen national legislation by further defining the crime of trafficking in all its elements and by reinforcing the punishment accordingly; enact social and economic policies and programmes, as well as informational and awareness-raising initiatives, to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children; prosecute perpetrators of trafficking; provide measures to support, assist and protect trafficked persons in their countries of origin and destination; and facilitate their return to and support their reintegration into their countries of origin.

98. (*a*) Improve knowledge and awareness of the remedies available for violations of women's human rights;

(*b*) Promote and protect the human rights of all migrant women and implement policies to address the specific needs of documented migrant women and, where necessary, tackle the existing inequalities between men and women migrants to ensure gender equality;

(*c*) Promote respect for the right of women and men to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Recognize the central role that religion, spirituality and belief play in the lives of millions of women and men;

(*d*) Encourage, through the media and other means, a high awareness of the harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women, some of which increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, and intensify efforts to eliminate such practices;

(*e*) Take necessary measures to protect individuals, groups and organs of society engaged in promoting and protecting women's human rights;

(*f*) Encourage States parties to continue to include a gender perspective in their reports to the treaty bodies; also encourage these bodies to continue to take into account a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates, taking into account the need to avoid unnecessary duplication and overlapping of their work; and further encourage human rights mechanisms to continue to take into account a gender perspective in their work;

(*g*) Support innovative programmes to empower older women to increase their contribution to and benefit from development and efforts to combat poverty.

99. (*a*) Promote comprehensive human rights education programmes, inter alia, in cooperation, where appropriate, with education and human rights institutions, the relevant actors of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and the media networks, to ensure widespread

[19] See resolution 54/126.

dissemination of information on human rights instruments, in particular those concerning the human rights of women and girls;

(*b*) Take measures through, inter alia, supporting and strengthening existing mechanisms entrusted with prosecuting perpetrators of violations of the human rights of women, to eliminate impunity;

(*c*) Take measures to eliminate violations of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Many of these violations have a negative impact on the promotion and protection of the human rights of women;

(*d*) Address the root causes of armed conflict in a comprehensive and durable manner, as well as the differences in the impact of armed conflict on women and men, and take them into account in relevant policies and programmes in order to, inter alia, enhance the protection of civilians, particularly women and children;

(*e*) Ensure the release of hostages, particularly women and children, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflict;

(*f*) Develop and support policies and programmes for the protection of children, especially girls, in hostilities, in order to prohibit their forced recruitment and use by all actors and to promote and/or strengthen mechanisms for their rehabilitation and reintegration, taking into account the specific experiences and needs of girls;

(*g*) Improve and strengthen the capacity of women affected by situations of armed conflict, including women refugees and displaced women, by, inter alia, involving them in the design and management of humanitarian activities so that they benefit from these activities on an equal basis with men;

(*h*) Invite the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, other relevant United Nations agencies, within their respective mandates, and other relevant humanitarian organizations as well as Governments to continue to provide adequate support to countries hosting large numbers of refugees and those with displaced persons, in their efforts to provide protection and assistance, paying particular attention to the needs of refugees and other displaced women and children;

(*i*) Seek to ensure the full and equal participation of women in the promotion of peace, in particular through the full implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace;[20]

(*j*) Provide support to and empower women who play an important role within their families as stabilizing factors in conflict and post-conflict situations;

(*k*) Strengthen efforts towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, based on the priorities established by the United Nations in the field of disarmament, so that released resources could be used for, inter alia, social and economic programmes which benefit women and girls;

(*l*) Explore new ways of generating new public and private financial resources, inter alia, through the appropriate reduction of excessive military expenditures and the arms trade and investment for arms production and acquisition, including global military expenditures, taking into consideration national security requirements, so as to permit the possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development, inter alia, for the advancement of women;

(*m*) Take measures to ensure the protection of refugees, especially women and girls, and their access to and the provision of gender-sensitive appropriate basic social services, including education and health.

[20] Resolutions 53/243 A and B.

100. (*a*) Cooperate and work with private sector partners and media networks at the national and international levels to promote equal access for women and men as producers and consumers, particularly in the area of information and communications technologies, including through encouraging the media and the information industry consistent with freedom of expression to adopt, or develop further codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self-regulatory guidelines to remove gender stereotypes and promote balanced portrayals of women and men;

(*b*) Develop programmes that support women's ability to create, access and promote networking, in particular through the use of new information and communications technology, including through the establishment and support of programmes to build the capacity of women's non-governmental organizations in this regard;

(*c*) Capitalize on the new information technologies, including the Internet, to improve the global sharing of information, research, strengths, lessons learned from women's experiences, including "Herstories"[21] related to achieving gender equality, development and peace, and study other roles that these technologies can play towards that goal.

101. (*a*) Take effective measures to address the challenges of globalization, including through the enhanced and effective participation of developing countries in the international economic policy decision-making process, in order to, inter alia, guarantee the equal participation of women, in particular those from developing countries, in the process of macroeconomic decision-making;

(*b*) Take measures, with the full and effective participation of women, to ensure new approaches to international development cooperation, based on stability, growth and equity, with the enhanced and effective participation and the integration of developing countries in the globalizing world economy, geared towards poverty eradication and the reduction of gender-based inequality within the overall framework of achieving people-centred sustainable development;

(*c*) Design and strengthen poverty eradication strategies, with the full and effective participation of women, that reduce the feminization of poverty and enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts of globalization;

(*d*) Intensify efforts to implement poverty eradication programmes and evaluate, with the participation of women, the extent to which these programmes have an impact on the empowerment of women living in poverty, in terms of access to quality training and education as well as physical and mental health care, employment, basic social services, inheritance and access to and control over land, housing, income, microcredit and other financial instruments and services, and introduce improvements to such programmes in the light of the above assessment;

(*e*) Recognizing the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication, elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies addressing social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

(*f*) Encourage the establishment, in partnership with private financial institutions, where appropriate, of "lending windows" and other accessible financial services with simplified procedures that are specifically designed to meet the savings, credit and insurance needs of all women;

(*g*) Undertake comprehensive actions to provide and support quality skills training for women and girls at all levels, on the basis of strategies developed with their full and effective participation, to achieve agreed targets to eradicate poverty, in particular the feminization of poverty, through national, regional and international efforts. National efforts need to be complemented by intensified regional and international cooperation in order to tackle the risks, overcome the challenges and ensure that opportunities created by globalization benefit women, particularly in developing countries;

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[21] "Herstories" is a widely used term denoting the recounting of events, both historical and contemporary, from a woman's point of view.

(*h*) Establish, with the full and effective participation of women and in consultation with civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, in a timely manner, social development funds, where appropriate, to alleviate the negative effects on women associated with structural adjustment programmes and trade liberalization and the disproportionate burden borne by women living in poverty;

(*i*) Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions which integrate a gender perspective to external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including least developed countries, inter alia, through debt relief, including the option of official development assistance debt cancellation, in order to help them to finance programmes and projects targeted at development, including the advancement of women;

(*j*) Support the Cologne initiative for the reduction of debt, particularly the speedy implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative; ensure the provision of adequate funds for its implementation and implement the provision that funds saved should be used to support anti-poverty programmes that address gender dimensions;

(*k*) Promote and accelerate the implementation of the 20/20 initiative, which integrates a gender perspective to fully benefit all, particularly women and girls;

(*l*) Call for continued international cooperation, including the reaffirmation to strive to fulfil the yet to be attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance as soon as possible, thereby increasing the flow of resources for gender equality, development and peace;

(*m*) Facilitate the transfer to developing countries and countries with economies in transition of appropriate technology, particularly new and modern technology, and encourage efforts by the international community to eliminate restrictions on such transfers, as an effective means of complementing national efforts for further acceleration in achieving the goals of gender equality, development and peace;

(*n*) Recommend that the Preparatory Committee for the Millennium Assembly make an effort, within the context of gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system, to integrate a gender perspective in all activities and documents related to the Millennium Assembly and Summit, including in the consideration of poverty eradication;

(*o*) Create an enabling environment and design and implement policies that promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, including the right to development – and fundamental freedoms, as part of the efforts to achieve gender equality, development and peace.

102. (*a*) Create and strengthen an enabling environment, in accordance with national laws, to support the capacity of women's non-governmental organizations to mobilize resources to ensure the sustainability of their development activities;

(*b*) Encourage the establishment and strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships/ cooperation at all levels among international and intergovernmental organizations, with relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and trade unions, and women's organizations and other non-governmental organizations, communications and media systems in support of the goals of the Fourth World Conference on Women;

(*c*) Encourage partnerships and cooperation among Governments, international organizations, in particular international financial institutions, and multilateral organizations, private sector institutions and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, especially women's and community-based organizations, to support poverty eradication initiatives focused on women and girls;

(*d*) Recognize the crucial role of and support women and women's non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in the implementation of Agenda 21,[22] by integrating a gender perspective in the formulation, design and implementation of sustainable environmental and resource management mechanisms, programmes and infrastructure.

103. (*a*) Promote programmes for healthy active ageing that stress the independence, equality, participation and security of older women and undertake gender-specific research and programmes to address their needs;

(*b*) As a matter of priority, especially in those countries most affected, and in partnership with non-governmental organizations, wherever possible, intensify education, services and community-based mobilization strategies to protect women of all ages from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including through the development of safe, affordable, effective and easily accessible female-controlled methods, including such methods as microbicides and female condoms that protect against sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS; voluntary and confidential HIV testing and counselling; the promotion of responsible sexual behaviour, including abstinence and condom use; and the development of vaccines, simple low-cost diagnosis and single dose treatments for sexually transmitted infections;

(*c*) Provide access to adequate and affordable treatment, monitoring and care for all people, especially women and girls, infected with sexually transmitted diseases or living with life-threatening diseases, including HIV/AIDS and associated opportunistic infections, such as tuberculosis. Provide other services, including adequate housing and social protection, including during pregnancy and breastfeeding; assist boys and girls orphaned as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and provide gender-sensitive support systems for women and other family members who are involved in caring for persons affected by serious health conditions, including HIV/AIDS;

(*d*) Take effective and expeditious measures to mobilize international and national public opinion concerning the effects of different dimensions of the world drug problem on women and girls and ensure that appropriate resources are provided to this end.

104. Encourage partnerships between Governments and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women and at other United Nations world conferences and summits in order to promote gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

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[22] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I, *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

IV. Decisions

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A. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

S-23/11. Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly decided that the Credentials Committee for the twenty-third special session, appointed in accordance with rule 28 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, would have the same membership as the Credentials Committee of the fifty-fourth regular session of the Assembly.

As a result, the Committee was composed of the following Member States: AUSTRIA, BOLIVIA, CHINA, PHILIPPINES, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SOUTH AFRICA, TOGO, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

S-23/12. Election of the President of the General Assembly[1]

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly decided that the President of the Assembly at its fifty-fourth regular session would serve in the same capacity at the twenty-third special session.

Mr. Theo-Ben GURIRAB (Namibia) was therefore elected President of the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session.

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[1] In accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the General Committee consists of the President of the Assembly, the twenty-one Vice-Presidents and the Chairpersons of the six Main Committees. See also decision S-23/15.

S-23/13. Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly[1]

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly decided that the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly at its fifty-fourth regular session would serve in the same capacity at the twenty-third special session.

The representatives of the following twenty-one Member States were therefore elected Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly: ALGERIA, BOLIVIA, CHINA, CONGO, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, CUBA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA, FRANCE, GRENADA, ICELAND, IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF), IRAQ, LITHUANIA, MONACO, NIGERIA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SEYCHELLES, TAJIKISTAN, THAILAND, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND and UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

S-23/14. Election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees[1]

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly decided that the Chairpersons of the Main Committees of the fifty-fourth regular session would serve in the same capacity at the twenty-third special session.

The following persons were therefore elected Chairpersons of the Main Committees:

First Committee:	Mr. Raimundo GONZALEZ (Chile)
Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee):	Mr. Sotirios ZACKHEOS (Cyprus)
Second Committee:	Mr. Roble OLHAYE (Djibouti)
Third Committee:	Mr. Vladimir GALUSKA (Czech Republic)
Fifth Committee:	Ms. Penny WENSLEY (Australia)
Sixth Committee:	Mr. Phakiso MOCHOCHOKO (Lesotho)

At the same meeting, the General Assembly was informed that the Chairperson of the Second Committee had designated Mr. Giovanni BRAUZZI (Italy), Vice-Chairperson of the Second Committee, to act as Chairperson of the Second Committee, in his absence, for the duration of the special session.

S-23/15. Election of the officers of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly elected the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session.

At the same meeting, the General Assembly decided that the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole would be a full member of the General Committee of the twenty-third special session.

At its 1st meeting, on 5 June 2000, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole elected its other officers.

The following persons were therefore elected officers of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole:

Chairperson:	Ms. Christine KAPALATA (United Republic of Tanzania)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Ms. Aicha AFIFI (Morocco) Ms. Asith BHATTACHARJEE (India) Ms. Patricia FLOR (Germany) Ms. Misako KAJI (Japan) Ms. Sonia R. LEONCE-CARRYL (Saint Lucia) Ms. Monica MARTINEZ (Ecuador) Ms. Kirsten MLACAK (Canada) Ms. Rasa OSTRAUSKAITE (Lithuania) Ms. Dubravka SIMONOVIC (Croatia)

At the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole decided that Ms. MARTINEZ would also serve as Rapporteur.

B. OTHER DECISIONS

S-23/21. Organizational arrangements for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[2] approved the following organizational arrangements for the special session:

A. *President*

1. The twenty-third special session shall take place under the presidency of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth regular session.

B. *Vice-Presidents*

2. The Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session shall be the same as those at its fifty-fourth regular session.

C. *Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole*

3. The General Assembly at its twenty-third special session shall establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session. The Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole shall consist of one Chairperson and nine Vice-Chairpersons, one of whom will serve as Rapporteur. The Bureau of the preparatory committee shall serve as the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

D. *Credentials Committee*

4. The Credentials Committee of the twenty-third special session shall have the same membership as the Credentials Committee of the fifty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Special Session, Supplement No. 2* (A/S-23/2), chap. V, sect. B.

E. *General Committee*

5. The General Committee of the twenty-third special session shall consist of the President and the twenty-one Vice-Presidents of the special session, the Chairpersons of the six Main Committees of the fifty-fourth regular session and the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

F. *Rules of procedure*

6. The rules of procedure of the General Assembly shall apply at the twenty-third special session.

G. *Debate in plenary*

7. Statements in the debate in plenary shall not exceed seven minutes.

H. *Participation of speakers other than Member States*

8. Observers may make statements in the debate in plenary.

9. States members of the specialized agencies that are not Members of the United Nations may participate in the special session in the capacity of observers.

10. Associate members of the regional commissions may participate in the special session, subject to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, in the same capacity of observer that applied to their participation in the Fourth World Conference on Women.

11. Heads of United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system may make statements in the debate in plenary. Representatives of the United Nations system may also make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. These arrangements will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly.

12. Given the availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may make statements in the debate in plenary. Representatives of non-governmental organizations may also make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. These arrangements will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly.

13. The Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will be invited to participate in the debate in plenary. This invitation will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly.

I. *Schedule of plenary meetings*

14. Ten plenary meetings shall be held over the five-day period, with two meetings per day according to the following schedule: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

S-23/22. Adoption of the agenda

At its 1st plenary meeting, on 5 June 2000, the General Assembly adopted the agenda for the twenty-third special session.[3]

At the same meeting, the General Assembly decided:

(*a*) To consider directly in plenary meeting all the items on the agenda;

(*b*) To allocate agenda items 8 and 9 to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session for its consideration.

[3] A/S-23/1.

S-23/23. Participation of non-governmental organizations in the debate in plenary

At its 9th plenary meeting, on 9 June 2000, the General Assembly, on the proposal of the President of the Assembly, decided that the following five non-governmental organizations might make statements in the debate in plenary: Women in Law and Development in Africa; Mahila Dakshata Samiti; Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women; Centro de la Mujer Peruana "Flora Tristan"; and Alliance for Arab Women.

Annex

Checklist of resolutions and decisions

This checklist includes the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its twenty-third special session. The resolutions and decisions were adopted without a vote.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No.	*Title*	*Item*	*Plenary meeting*	*Date of adoption*	*Page*
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S-23/2.	Political declaration	10	10th	10 June 2000	5
S-23/3.	Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	10	10th	10 June 2000	6

DECISIONS

Decision No.	*Title*	*Item*	*Plenary meeting*	*Date of adoption*	*Page*
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S-23/12.	Election of the President of the General Assembly	4	1st	5 June 2000	41
S-23/13.	Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly	6	1st	5 June 2000	42
S-23/14.	Election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees	6	1st	5 June 2000	42
S-23/15.	Election of the officers of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly	6	1st	5 June 2000	42
	B. Other decisions				
S-23/21.	Organizational arrangements for the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly	6	1st	5 June 2000	43
S-23/22.	Adoption of the agenda	7	1st	5 June 2000	44
S-23/23.	Participation of non-governmental organizations in the debate in plenary	6	9th	9 June 2000	45

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